

REMARKS

Claims 18 through 30, 32 through 36, 39 through 59, and 61 through 70 are pending in this application. Claims 1 through 17, 31, 37, 38, and 60 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 19, 20, 32, 35, 36, 39, 43, 45, 50, 55, 61, and 66 through 70 are the independent claims. Claims 19, 20, 32, 35, 36, 39, 43, 45, 50, 61 and 66 through 70 have been rewritten in independent form. Claims 18, 21, 33, 40 through 42, 44, 46, 47, 54, 55 and 62 have also been amended.

The Examiner has objected to the drawings and required correction to Figure 1 to add a legend designating the figure as prior art.

The Examiner has rejected claims 46 and 54 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 through 14, 15 through 49, 51 through 53, 60, 62, 63 and 65 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Albal (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0185375).

The Examiner has allowed claims 55 through 59. The Examiner has objected to claims 19, 20, 32, 35, 36, 39, 43, 45, 46, 48, 50, 61, 64 and 66 through 70, but indicated they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants' silence as to the Examiner's rejections should not be construed as acquiescence to these rejections, and Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of all rejected claims in a continuation application.

DRAWINGS

Applicants are submitting concurrently herewith a Letter to the Official Draftsperson to submit a formal Figure 1 to include a --PRIOR ART-- legend, as required by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner approve the new figure and withdraw the objection.

§112 REJECTION

The Examiner has rejected claims 46 and 54 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 46 and 54, as amended, do not recite the language “group of” that was the basis for the rejection. Applicants respectfully submit that the §112, ¶ 2, rejection with respect to these claims is moot and respectfully request that it be withdrawn.

§103 REJECTION

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 through 14, 15 through 49, 51 through 53, 60, 62, 63 and 65 under U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Albal (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0185375). Claims 18, 21, 33, 40 through 42, 44, 46, 47, 54, 55 and 62 have been amended to depend from allowable claims. Claims 1 through 17, 31, 37, 38 and 60 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the §103(a) rejection is moot and respectfully request that it be withdrawn.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner has allowed claims 55 through 59. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indicated allowed claims.

The Examiner has objected to claims 19, 20, 32, 35, 36, 39, 43, 45, 46, 48, 50, 61, 64 and 66 through 70, but indicated they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In order to expedite prosecution and issuance, Applicants have rewritten claims 19, 20, 32, 35, 36, 39, 43, 45, 50, 61, and 66 through 70 in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening base claims. Applicants have also amended claims 18, 21, 33, 40 through 42, 44, 46, 47, 54, 55 and 62 to depend from the allowable rewritten independent claims. Accordingly, claims 18 through 30, 32 through 36, 39 through 59 and 61 through 70 are in allowable condition, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to issue a notice of allowance for all of the currently pending claims.

CONCLUSION

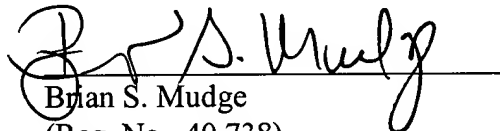
In view of the amendments and remarks submitted above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the present case is in condition for allowance. Applicants' silence as to some of the Examiner's comments is not indicative of an acquiescence to the stated grounds of rejection and Applicants reserve the right to file a continuation application to pursue the original subject matter of the claims. Applicants again respectfully request issuance of a notice of allowance for all currently pending claims.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees under 37 C.F.R. §1.16 or §1.17 or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-0600.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 220-4214 to discuss any matter concerning this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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